ANCIENT HISTORY;

INCLUDING THE PROGRESS OF

LITERATURE

AND THE

FINE ARTS.

BY

WILLIAM RUTHERFORD, D.D.

MASTER OF THE ACADEMY AT UXBRIDGE.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR:

AND

SOLD BY J. MURRAY, N° 32, FLEET-STREET.

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THE MOST NOBLE

The Marquis of LANSDOWN,

EARL OF SHELBURNE, &c. &c.

KNIGHT OF MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER.

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MY LORD,

I BEG leave to dedicate to your Lordſhip the following Volume, which contains a View of Antient Hiſtory, from its commencement after the Deluge, to the concluſion of the firſt war between the Greeks and Perſians. In compoſing a work, originally intended for the inſtruction and improvement of youth, I have ſtudied to ſelect my materials from the moſt authentic ſources; to ſeparate

the region of fable from that of hiſtory; and to ſuggeſt ſuch views of human affairs, as ſerve not only to enlighten the mind, but to form the heart to virtue, and inſpire principles of true religion. In arranging the records of antiquity, it occurred to me, that ſomething of more importance might be communicated, than the mere detail of tranſactions; and that by combining the progreſs of human diſcoveries, of the fine arts and of literature, with the ſeries of hiſtorical incidents, materials of reflection and objects of reſearch might be ſuggeſted, that would not only prove uſeful to the young, when entering into life, but intereſting to the world at large. How far I have ſucceeded in my plan, I muſt leave to

the

the deciſion of thoſe readers who, like your Lordſhip, not only peruſe, but ſtudy the volumes of Antient and Modern Hiſtory.

It redounded to the praiſe of the antients, that a taſte for the arts and ſciences was frequently united with talents for public affairs; the road to buſineſs and the path to literature coincided; and the hero and the ſtateſman joined to the cares of the commonwealth an elegant intercourſe with the Muſes. Nor is this union, however rare, altogether unknown in modern times. Foreign nations, as well as the Engliſh, have remarked the variety and extent of your Lordſhip's literary acquirements; have admired your profound knowledge of continental politics, joined to a perfect

acquaintance with the affairs of your own country; and extolled your zeal to promote the intereſts of ſcience, and diſtinguiſh men of letters by your patronage.

WHILE under the ſhade of the olive we cultivate the arts which are the offſpring of peace, it is impoſſible not to reflect with gratitude on the Miniſter to whoſe abilities we are indebted for that inеſtimable bleſſing. It belongs to future hiſtorians to record, that after the moſt calamitous war in which this kingdom was ever involved, a ſtateſman aroſe, who, by the aſcendency of ſuperior talents, eſtabliſhed peace among the contending nations, retrieved the fallen fortunes of his country, and reſtored Britain to her antient rank and dignity in the ſyſtem of Europe.

THAT

THAT your Lordſhip may long live to maintain the poſt of honour, whether in a public or a private ſtation, and, with the independent ſpirit of a Briton, to ſupport or reſiſt the politics of the times, as they are favourable or adverſe to the public good, is the earneſt wiſh of,

MY LORD,

Your Lordſhip's moſt obedient

and moſt humble Servant,

WILLIAM RUTHERFORD.

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ERRATA.

Page 25, line 8, *for* conqûeſts, *read* career.
—, line 20, *for* demonſtrate, *read* demonſtrates.
31, line 9, *for* where, *read* at which.
54, laſt line, *for* were the, *read* were only the.
55, line 17, *for* Eneph, *read* Cneph.
89, line 5, *for* of the, *read* which belong to the.
96, laſt line, *for* aſtronomy, *read* aſtrology.
136, line 14, *for* whom, *read* which.
171, line 11, *for* Rebla, *read* Kebla.
272, line 3, *for* Jaob, *read* Joab.

Any other typographical errors that may occur, the reader is deſired to correct with his pen.

VI.C.31

A VIEW OF ANTIENT HISTORY.

INTRODUCTION.

INTRO-DUCTION.

UNIVERSAL history coincides with the ſacred records in aſcribing a recent origin to the human race. If from phyſical obſervations on the phenomena of the earth, the philoſopher be led to refer its original creation to a high antiquity, from ſimilar obſervations he regards it in its preſent form, as riſing from the ruins of a former ſtructure, by one of thoſe revolutions which are incident to the globe, as well as its inhabitants. Theſe concluſions, which the philoſopher draws from the appearances of nature, are confirmed by the reſearches of the hiſtorian, who diſcerns unequivocal marks of the infancy of mankind in every part of the world. No written

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THE Antient World

Drawn and Engraved for
DR. RUTHERFORD'S
View of Antient History

ICELAND
SWEDEN
NORWAY
RUSSIA
BRITISH ISLES
BRITISH OCEAN
IRELAND
DENMARK
BALTIC SEA
PRUSSIA
POLAND
GERMANY
NETHERLANDS
SCYTHIA
FRANCE
LITTLE TARTARY
HUNGARY
SWITZERLAND
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Bay of Biscay
TURKEY IN EUROPE
THRACE
Crimea
SPAIN
PORTUGAL
Balearic Isles
Majorca
Minorca
Ivica
Sardinia
Sicily
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Gades or Cadiz
Pillars of Hercules
Straits of Gibraltar
MACEDONIA
PELOPONNESUS
PHRYGIA
PONTUS
CAPPADOCIA
ASIA MINOR
LYCAONIA
CILICIA
PAMPHILIA
CARIA
LICIA
SYRIA
PALESTINE
IDUMEA
MESOPOTAMIA
BABYLONIA
CHALDEA
SUSIANA
PERSIS
PARTHIA
MEDIA
PERSIA
CARAMANIA
MAKRAN or GEDROCIA
DRANGIANA
ARIA
MARGIANA
LIBIA
HEPTANOMIS
THEBAIS
ETHIOPIA
ARABIA
Deserts
Red Sea or Arabian Gulf
Persian Gulf
Straits of Babelmandel
SOUTHERN OR INDIAN OCEAN

London Engraved for J. Murray, Jun.r 32 N.o 3 Fleet Street.

INTRODUCTION.

records aſcend beyond the period of four thouſand years; no monuments appear on the ſurface, or are diſcovered in the bowels of the earth, of nations, with whoſe hiſtory we are not in ſome degree acquainted; no remains of art are now apparent, by which the human hand can be recognized, anterior to the page of hiſtory, or the tales of tradition.

The deluge.

WE are aſſured, from the certain evidence of ſacred hiſtory, that, above 4000 years ago, a convulſion of the elements took place, and the world aſſumed a new form. The memorials of that general deluge, which changed the globe, and deſtroyed its inhabitants, are tranſmitted by univerſal tradition, and recorded on the face of nature.

THE ſurviving remnants of the old world, whoſe piety preſerved them in the general wreck, are the ſecond anceſtors of the human race. The preternatural longevity which they enjoyed, was favourable to the multiplication of their deſcendants, and the gradual population of the earth. From thoſe countries in Aſia, where the family of Noah, the father of the new world, ſettled or wandered after the flood, we can trace the migrations of the firſt men towards the weſtern hemiſphere. In proportion to their diſtance from

their native region, we find the nations more or leſs civilized; the courſe of improvement has run from eaſt to weſt. Aſia Minor, Greece, Italy, Gaul, Britain, which one after another were enlightened and refined, derived their knowledge and their refinement from an intercourſe more immediate or remote with that part of the world which retained ſome portion of civility and the arts; whilſt the reſt of mankind degenerated into barbarians and ſavages.

First ages after the flood.

In the firſt ages after the flood, the paſtoral life, which had been adopted by the patriarchs, was the occupation of men. The bonds of propinquity, and the terror of wild beaſts, would keep them united, while their numbers were inconſiderable. But at a period when the life of man extended to three centuries, and in fertile regions as yet but thinly inhabited, the growth of population would be prodigious. In the paſtoral ſtate, men are accuſtomed to migrate from place to place with their families and their flocks; a large extent of territory is requiſite for the ſubſiſtence of a ſmall tribe; frequent quarrels would ariſe among rival fraternities, ſimilar to thoſe which took place between the herdſmen of Abraham and the herdſmen of Lot; accord-

INTRODUCTION.

Diſperſion of tribes.

ingly they would be diſpoſed to recede from one another, and gradually compelled to ſpread themſelves over the earth. All hiſtory abounds with proofs, that ſuch a migrating ſpirit has operated over the far greater part of the globe; it has never ceaſed to actuate a large portion of mankind; and ſtill prevails among the Arabians of the deſert, and the numberleſs hordes that wander over the immenſe continent ſtretching from the north of European Turkey to the northern frontier of China. In ſuch a ſituation it required no miracle to diſperſe men, when it was impoſſible they could remain united and keep together. The common opinion concerning the confuſion of languages at the building of Babel, and the conſequent diſperſion of mankind, as a judgment from heaven, is inconſiſtent with the Moſaic narrative. Long after this period, the ſame language was ſpoken in different parts of the world. Abraham, who came from Meſopotamia, ſojourned among various nations of Aſia, among the deſcendants of Ham in Egypt, and converſed with them all. And it is evident, from ſacred ſcripture, that after this era, the ſame language, or different dialects of the ſame language, prevailed from the gulf of Perſia to the pillars of Hercules,

The confuſion of languages.

and

and from the ſouth point of Arabia to the Black-ſea.

FROM the generations of the ſons of Noah, recorded in Geneſis *, it alſo appears, that the tribes of men diſperſed themſelves over the earth, according to the ties of kindred and natural connection; an event which could not have taken place, had they been ſcattered in a tumultuous manner, and in conſequence of the Divine vengeance. After enumerating the deſcendants of Japhet, "By "theſe," ſays Moſes, "were the iſles of the "Gentiles divided in their lands, every one "after his tongue, after their families, in "their nations." Similar expreſſions are employed with reſpect to the poſterity of Shem and of Ham. Theſe expreſſions ſuppoſe, that nations were formed according to the natural connections of blood and of language; and, of conſequence, that they owed their origin to choice, and not to the accidental concourſe of fugitives who were ſtrangers to the language of one another.

As the various tribes ſeparated from the parent ſtock in the infancy of arts, and before language had become copious or fixed,

* Chap. x.

INTRODUCTION.

their future progreſs is eaſily explained. Thoſe who ſettled in the fine climate and fertile region of Aſia, would ſoon naturally be led to unite under a regular form of government, cultivate arts, and improve their language.

Savage ſtate.

The hordes who migrated to the mountains, and the dens of Europe, found countries overgrown with wood, and inhabited only by wild beaſts. Hunting became their chief reſource for ſubſiſtence; arms were their firſt neceſſaries. Unconnected with the tribes whom they had left behind, ſubſiſting by the chace, and living in a ſtate of war with the beaſts of the field, the ſcanty knowledge of arts which they could boaſt of, would ſoon be forgotten, and neceſſity limit their ideas and their language, to the narrow points of ſubſiſtence and ſecurity. A tribe of hunters in a ſavage foreſt, partake the nature of their aſſociates, the wolf and the lion, and neceſſarily become ferocious. Accordingly we find traces and veſtiges of that primitive condition of our ſpecies in the early accounts of Europe, Africa, America, and of every part of the world, except thoſe regions of Aſia, whoſe inhabitants never abandoned their original abodes, nor intirely loſt the arts and acquiſitions of their fathers.

CIVILIZED nations are the ſubjects of hiſtory;

tory; and, in proportion as wild and wandering tribes begin to ſettle in a fixed habitation, to build cities, to form governments, and to inſtitute laws, their annals become intereſting, and deſerve to be recorded.

CIVIL hiſtory agrees with ſacred in repreſenting Aſia as the firſt civilized portion of the world. There Nimrod laid the foundation of the Babylonian, and Aſſur of the Aſſyrian empire, in the firſt ages after the flood. The regions known at preſent by the name of Perſia, muſt have made early advances to civilization; for their ſovereign Chedorlaomer, in the days of Abraham, had ſubjected a great extent of country to his authority. Several ſtates, often mentioned by Moſes, were alſo formed, at that time, in Paleſtine, and on the banks of Jordan. But little is known concerning theſe early ages. The ſacred books, the only certain ſources of information with regard to ſuch remote events, leave us intirely in the dark. The relations of profane hiſtorians are obſcure, fabulous, and contradictory. In general, it appears, both from ſacred and profane hiſtory, that Nineveh and Babylon were originally the capitals of two kingdoms, were governed by diſtinct monarchs, and continued ſeparate 440 years.

Foundation of Babylon and Nineveh.

INTRODUCTION.

Of the ſovereigns who reigned at Nineveh from Aſſur to Ninus, the hiſtory is loſt: their names are not ſo much as recorded. The Aſſyrian empire, ſo celebrated in hiſtory, like other early eſtabliſhments, was inconſiderable in its commencement. Ninus was the firſt who attempted to enlarge its boundaries by foreign conqueſt.

AFTER Nimrod, ſeven kings, Chaldeans by birth, reigned ſucceſſively at Babylon. A family of princes, originally from Arabia, then ſeized on the throne. Six of theſe ſucceeded each other without interruption. Under the laſt of theſe kings, Ninus, the ſovereign of Aſſyria, attacked and defeated the Babylonians, and by that conqueſt joined the throne of Babylon to that of Nineveh, about 590 years after the flood. From the union of theſe two nations into one great people, the antient empire of the Aſſyrians aroſe; an empire which held Aſia in ſubjection for eight hundred years.

Subjects of hiſtory in the early ages of the world.

KINGS and nations are not the ſubjects of hiſtory in the early ages of the world. The progreſs of the human race is every where ſlow and gradual, and the firſt form of ſociety always rude and imperfect. Aſia, like Europe, was originally divided into ſmall co-ordinate ſtates; every

every city was governed by its own chief, or ruler; and petty principalities, independent of one another, were univerſally eſtabliſhed.—*Quot urbes tot regna*, is the deſcription of nations in their original ſtate, in every country of the world. The kingdoms of Nineveh and Babylon, conſiſted each of one mighty city with its environs. They were properly fortified provinces, in which the people plowed and ſowed, and paſtured their cattle within the walls. The empires of Aſſyria, Chaldea, and Perſia, were the effect of conqueſt, the growth of time, and the work of ages. Previous to the period wherein they begin to figure as kingdoms, Egypt becomes the principal ſcene of hiſtorical record; a country which, though not the firſt inhabited, was the firſt civilized part of the world.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Of the EGYPTIANS.

CHAP. I.

Deſcription of Egypt.

ANTIENT Egypt conſiſted of a narrow region, which reached from Syene in Ethiopia, downwards to the Delta, following the courſe of the Nile. It is bounded on the eaſt by the Red-ſea and the Iſthmus of Suez, on the ſouth by Ethiopia, on the weſt by Lybia, and on the north by the Mediterranean. The Nile runs from ſouth to north through the whole country, ſix hundred miles in length. This long tract is incloſed on each ſide with a ridge of mountains; the ſpace between the river and the hills on either hand, ſometimes extends only to the diſtance of ſixteeen miles. On the coaſt of the Mediterranean the extent of the plain is above three hundred miles*.

Diviſion of Egypt.

ANTIENT Egypt was divided into three principal parts; Upper Egypt, otherwiſe called

* Diodor. lib. ii. Jul. African. apud. Syncell. p. 92.

Thebais,

CHAP. I.

Thebais, the moſt ſouthern diviſion; Middle Egypt, or Heptanomis, ſo called from the ſeven diſtricts into which it was divided; and Lower Egypt, which included the Delta and all the country as far as the Red-ſea, and along the Mediterranean to Rhinocolura, or Mount Caſius. Under Seſoſtris all Egypt became one kingdom, and was divided into thirty-ſix governments. The cities of Syene and Elephantina divided Egypt from Ethiopia, and in the days of Auguſtus were the boundaries of the Roman Empire.

Importance of its hiſtory.

THIS celebrated country has a claim to the attention of all nations and ages. The Egyptians were the firſt enlightened and refined people of the antient world; and the ſpecimens which they exhibited in arts, and in literature, became models of imitation to other nations. Here philoſophy found its earlieſt ſeat; and the light of ſcience was kindled, whoſe radiance diffuſing itſelf over Greece, has ſucceſſively illuminated the reſt of the world. The wiſdom of the Egyptians was proverbial among the nations of antiquity. Orpheus and Homer adopted their mythology; Pythagoras and Plato inſtructed themſelves in their mathematical and philoſophical diſcoveries; Lycurgus and Solon ſtudied the principles

CHAP. I.

principles of their legiſlation and government. When Greece was in the meridian of its ſplendor, and renowned for arts, as well as arms, no perſon could riſe to diſtinction who had not viſited the banks of the Nile, and converſed with the fathers of ſcience.

IT is difficult to form a juſt judgment of a people whoſe hiſtory has periſhed. Our materials of information concerning them are ſcattered up and down the writings of the early Greeks who travelled into Egypt. To ſtudy their hiſtory is to walk among ruins. There the vulgar eye diſcerns nothing but marks of deſolation: the contemplative mind may be led, from the natural prejudice in favour of antiquity, to attribute too much to a ſplendor that has paſſed away, and to efforts of genius that may return no more. By conſidering cauſes in connection with their actual conſequences, and forbearing conjecture when unſupported by evidence, errors, whether on the ſide of admiration or contempt, may be avoided, and a juſt eſtimation formed of this ſingular people.

Formation of Egypt.

THE formation of Egypt is not the leaſt ſingular part of its hiſtory. This antient country, like Venice or Holland in modern times, was gained from the waters, and is in a great meaſure

meaſure the creation of the human hand. The Nile, like the Euphrates, the Indus, and the Ganges, annually overflows its banks. The inundation continues for a hundred days, and covers the whole country. The river which overflows the fields enriches them at the ſame time; the ſoil acquires new fertility; and when the waters retire, vegetation comes on with rapidity. The richneſs of the land, and the beauty of the ſcene, would tempt inhabitants to occupy this delightful region; frequently would their flocks and herds be ſwept away; But experience inſtructs; neceſſity, the parent of ingenious invention, ſuggeſted the means of remedying the evil, and at the ſame time retaining the benefit of this annual inundation. Accordingly trenches and canals were cut to conduct the water through all the country without overflowing it; towns and villages were ſituated on riſing grounds; houſes of ſeveral ſtories were reared; and high terraces formed, to communicate between one city and another.

AT the point where the Nile divides into many ſtreams, the country below was long a moraſs; but when in the courſe of improvement canals were made, and the waters drained

ed

CHAP. I.

ed away, it became the richeſt, and at the ſame time the moſt beautiful part of Egypt. It was called Delta, from its triangular figure, and reſemblance to the Greek letter of that name; and was divided into a number of iſlands which ſwarmed with inhabitants. Theſe iſlands abounded in towns and cities beyond any part of the world, and were adorned with gardens, containing a profuſion of fruit-trees of every kind, particularly palms, peach-trees, and groves of acacia.

The Delta.

Lake of Mœris.

ON the Lybian ſide, to the left of the Nile, a chain of mountains, continued almoſt from the Cataracts to Fayoum, ſuddenly departs towards Lybia, and returning eaſtward, forms an immenſe baſon, lower than the bed of the river. This region was formerly covered by barren ſands. An antient king, named Mœris, conceived the magnificent though arduous project of changing this deſart into an uſeful lake. When the ſoil was dug, and cleared, he formed a canal, a hundred and twenty miles in length, and three hundred feet wide, to introduce the waters of the Nile. This grand canal, which is ſtill intire, is known by the name of Bahr Youſeph, or River of Joſeph, and is in many places cut through the rock. In this manner

ner the lake Mœris was formed, "which," according to Strabo *, "for its extent, colour, and ſhores reſembles a ſea." CHAP. I.

Two other canals (thoſe of Tamich and Bouch) were cut by this prince, and ſluices formed near their mouths, which were ſhut during the increaſe of the Nile. During the inundation, the waters entering through the canal of Joſeph, were collected in the vaſt circumference of the lake Mœris, where they were bounded by mountains on one ſide and mounds on the other. When the Nile decreaſed, the ſluices of the leſſer canals were opened, and a body of water near eighty leagues in circumference †, and thirty feet higher than the uſual level of the river, formed a ſecond inundation, directed at will: One part was returned to the Nile for the purpoſe of navigation; another branched into innumerable rivulets, watered the fields, and diffuſed fertility in its courſe. Canals.

THE richneſs and abundance of this favoured country are the gift of the Nile. It ſeldom rains in Egypt; but the river, which waters the whole by its regular inundations, conveys to it the rains and ſnows of other

* Lib. xvii. † Herodotus.

countries.

CHAP. I.

countries. To multiply the beneficence of the Nile, Egypt was croſſed by numberleſs canals, which run through the whole region. It carried fertility into every field along with its ſalutary waters; the champaign country was delivered up to it; and the inhabitant rejoiced when he marked his fields diſappearing below the wave.

Sources of the Nile.

THE opinion of the antients concerning the ſources of this river, and the cauſes of its inundation, are no leſs various than extravagant. Homer has conjectured the truth, who tells us "that the Nile comes down from heaven." The periodical rains which fall in Ethiopia are the cauſe of this phenomenon. The winds, which in Egypt and Syria are alſo periodical, during the months of March, April, May, and June, blow from the north, and drive the clouds towards the high mountains, beyond the equator *. Stopped by this barrier, clouds accumulate

* Savary, letter viii.—The prieſts knew the origin of the Nile, and communicated the ſecret to ſome of the Grecian philoſophers. The heavy rains which fall in ſummer, ſays Euſtathius (in Odyſſ. iv.) ſwell the Nile, as Ariſtotle and Eudoxus affirm, who ſay they received this information from the Egyptian prieſts. They alſo knew that theſe rains were occaſioned by the north winds.—The rains of Abyſſinia are attributed to the Eteſian

accumulate on clouds, till they deſcend in rain, which falls in torrents and fills the vallies. The union of an innumerable multitude of rivulets forms the Nile, and produces the inundation. Taking its riſe in Ethiopia, this river divides into two branches, one of which, known by the name of Aſſerac, or the Blue River, joins the Niger, and, traverſing Africa from eaſt to weſt, falls into the Atlantic ocean. The other, running north, between two chains of mountains; and meeting with rocks of granite which impede its courſe, pours ſeven cataracts down into the plain, with a prodigious noiſe, that is heard at the diſtance of many miles. Arriving at the firſt city of Egypt, it falls into a gulf dug by the percuſſion of its own waters. Deſcending through this fine country, it fills the canals and lakes, overflows the lands, depoſits a fruitful ſlime, and diſcharges itſelf through ſeven mouths into the Mediterranean.

Annual inundation of the Nile.

THE increaſe of the Nile begins early in June, but is not much perceived till the ſummer ſolſtice, when the waters become troubled,

Eteſian winds, which drive the northern clouds thither. Pliny, lib. v. Pompon. Mela, lib. i. — Democritus had alſo divined the cauſe, vide Diodor. Sicul. lib. ii.

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and of a reddiſh tincture. It continues increaſing till near the end of Auguſt. A nilometer at Elephantina formerly denoted to what degree the inundation would riſe. Travellers, antient and modern, deſcribe with rapture the proſpect which Egypt preſents at that ſeaſon of the year. Aſcending a mountain, or one of the largeſt pyramids in Grand Cairo, you behold the river overflowing the country around, the towns and villages appearing above, like iſlands in the midſt of the ocean: The whole interſperſed with gardens and groves, whoſe tops only are viſible. Mountains and woods terminate, at the utmoſt diſtance the eye can diſcover, this ſingular and fanciful ſcene.

Antiquity of Egypt.

THE Egyptian hiſtory is involved in darkneſs, and intermixed with fable. Not ſatisfied with their juſt claim to a high antiquity, the prieſts and philoſophers carried their pretenſions to an incredible extent, and traced back their chronology to ages without number. Like the oriental nations, they have filled up the unknown part of their annals agreeable to their imagination; they have ſupplied the want of true hiſtory with the marvellous, and under the ſhade of a dark antiquity have reared a ſplendid but viſionary fabric.

fabric. The prieſts of Thebes, as we are informed by Herodotus, aſſigned to their monarchy a duration of 11,340 years; others ſcrupled not to advance it to a hundred thouſand. Manetho, an Egyptian prieſt, who wrote about three centuries before the Chriſtian era, and whoſe authority appeared reſpectable to Joſephus, relates, that Egypt was at firſt governed by gods and demigods. Vulcan, the firſt of theſe reputed divine monarchs, reigned nine thouſand years. Thirty-one dynaſties of kings ſucceeded theſe divinities, and reigned in ſucceſſion over Egypt for the ſpace of 500,000 years. With regard to theſe extravagant pretenſions to antiquity, we may obſerve, that there is a point in the annals of all antient nations, where fable ends and hiſtory begins. Beyond a certain period, romance ſupplies the want of authentic information. Human nature is not the ſubject of record in theſe fanciful deſcriptions. Prodigies are related in the place of real events; we find ourſelves not on the ſolid ground of hiſtory, but in a fairy ſcene of fiction; and, inſtead of the tranſactions of men, we meet with the adventures of giants and demigods. This is the great criterion by which we diſ- CHAP. I.

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tinguiſh the hiſtorical from the fabulous times.

REJECTING, therefore, theſe abſurd and incredible tales, Egypt preſents us with the ſame appearance which we meet with in the early annals of every country, a number of independent principalities, each governed by its head or ruler. The chief of theſe were Thebes, Thin, Memphis, and Tanis. Menes, who united theſe under one government, appears to have been the firſt king of Egypt. According to the moſt probable conjectures, he began his reign about 330 years after the deluge. The principalities of Egypt, now united under one head, began to figure as a powerful kingdom. Works of public utility were carried on; the marſhy grounds were drained; pits were dug to receive the waſte waters; Lower Egypt, formerly a moraſs, began to rival the Higher; and the firſt kingdom in the world aſſumed dignity and ſplendor. Sacred and civil hiſtory agree in confirming the high antiquity of monarchical government in Egypt. In the age of Abraham, about 400 years after the flood, while the plains of Perſia were paſtured by roaming ſhepherds, we find Egypt a well-regulated kingdom,

Menes, the firſt king of Egypt.

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kingdom, flouriſhing in agriculture, and not only of ability to ſuffice its own inhabitants, but alſo to ſupply the neighbouring nations with corn. Inſtead of the ſimple chieftain of an independent tribe, we find a king of the common name of Pharaoh, ſurrounded by a train of princes, and living in the ſplendor and luxury of a court. When Joſeph was carried a captive to Egypt, the monarch was attended with guards and officers of ſtate, and circled with all that external pomp and magnificence which adorn the majeſty of ſovereigns in the moſt polite ages. We behold the kingdom divided into ſeveral departments: A council compoſed of perſons of the greateſt wiſdom and experience; miniſters of ſtate; different priſons for the confinement of criminals; a prieſthood enjoying ſettled revenues; public granaries; a trade in ſlaves; and a commerce with different nations.

FROM Menes, the firſt king in Egypt, to Seſoſtris, there occurs a vaſt interval, in which hiſtory is ſilent; a long tract of unknown time, marked only by two events, the invaſion of the ſhepherd kings, and the reign of Oſymandias. The royal ſhepherds were natives of Arabia, ſprung from thoſe warlike and roving tribes, who never ſettle in cities, but migrating

The ſhepherd kings.

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migrating with their flocks and herds, find their country always before them. Theſe poured from the eaſt in great numbers, and made themſelves maſters of Lower Egypt. Upper Egypt remained unconquered, and was governed by kings of its own. After the royal ſhepherds had reigned in the lower part of the country 259 years, they were compelled to retire from Egypt by Aonoſis, a powerful monarch, who at that period aſcended the throne.

THE preciſe era of Oſymandias's reign is alſo unknown.

Reign of Oſymandias.

HIS palace, and the other magnificent edifices which he reared, have been celebrated by Diodorus Siculus. He built the firſt library of the world, and placed this inſcription on the front—"The remedies of the mind." His firſt occupations were military. He gained a complete victory over the Bactrians who had revolted; and after his achievements in war, applied to the works of peace. The magnificence of his reign appears from the inſcription upon his ſtatue—"I am Oſymandyas, king of kings; he that would comprehend my grandeur, let him ſurpaſs me in my works."

THE Egyptians were never eſteemed a warlike

like nation. Their country, ſurrounded almoſt every where by mountains or ſeas, defended them by a natural fortification from the approach of enemies. The abundant fertility of the land prevented, or rendered leſs frequent, thoſe roving expeditions for plunder, which we find among the antient people. Their army, as we are told by Herodotus, amounted, in the time of peace, to 41,000; but nothing, except actual war, will ever create warriors. Egypt cultivated the civil rather than the military virtues, and by the love of arts, not the ſplendour of arms, attracted the admiration of poſterity. Notwithſtanding, however, her pacific ſpirit, ſhe enjoyed an age of martial glory, and exhibited a conqueror, who vies for reputation with the moſt celebrated heroes of antiquity. CHAP. I.

Reign of Seſoſtris.

SESOSTRIS aſcended the throne 1650 years before the Chriſtian era. As the kingdom of Egypt was compoſed of different principalities, it had been ſhaken by ſeditions, and was ſubject to revolts. In order to employ theſe active ſpirits, and blend his people in one, Seſoſtris meditated a military expedition againſt all his neighbours, or what in thoſe days was called the conqueſt of the world. He took the neceſſary meaſures to aſſure ſucceſs to his

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arms. His firſt care was to regulate the ſtate of his troops, which had been neglected by his predeceſſors. The maxim of the Egyptians was to keep on foot a numerous army, or rather militia, divided into two bodies, the Celeſyrians and the Hermotybians. Their cuſtom was to diſtribute theſe troops into the different provinces of the empire. The ſoldiers had no pay, and were interdicted the exerciſe of any mechanic art; but, in requital, the ſtate had provided abundantly for their ſubſiſtence. They aſſigned to each ſoldier twelve aruras of land, exempted from all taxes: Theſe they let to farmers for a fixed rent. The profeſſion of a ſoldier was next in honour to the prieſthood. When we conſider the extent and population of Egypt, we may conclude, that the army fitted out by Seſoſtris was numerous and powerful; though, at the ſame time, hiſtorians have exaggerated beyond all bounds, when they inform us, that he aſſembled 600,000 foot, 24,000 horſe, and 27,000 armed chariots, beſides equipping a fleet of 400 ſail on the Red-ſea. Having put his army in motion, he marched to the ſouth, and invaded the Ethiopians, whom he defeated and rendered tributary. He paſſed thence into Aſia, and ſubdued the people as he

he advanced. Herodotus diſcovered in the Leſſer Aſia, from the one ſea to the other, monuments of his victories, with the proud inſcription of "Seſoſtris, king of kings, and lord of lords." It is impoſſible, however, preciſely to determine to what point this conqueror carried his arms in that part of the world. Herodotus limits his conqueſts, on one ſide, to the Aſiatic regions, ſituated along the Arabian gulf; and on the other, to the eaſtern provinces of that continent. With reſpect to Europe, hiſtorians agree, that Thrace was the boundary of his conqueſts. CHAP. I.

THE expedition of this monarch illuſtrates the method of making war in theſe times. The military art was then in its infancy. Armed chariots, as among all nations in the early periods of their hiſtory, formed the principal ſtrength of their armies. The rapidity with which Seſoſtris made his conqueſts, demonſtrate, that the people whom he attacked were ignorant of war. Neither cities nor fortreſſes retarded the progreſs of the conqueror. The name of the countries which he ſubdued, the infinite number of nations whom he conquered, and the ſhort ſpace in which he ran his career of victory, are ſufficient to demonſtrate, that the people he encountered were unwarlike Military art.

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unwarlike or undiſciplined; and that the reſiſtance which he met with, was not that of regular troops. Among uncivilized and barbarous tribes, an army has only to ſhew itſelf to overcome. The expeditions of the antient heroes, prove with what facility a conqueror in theſe times could over-run the world. This explains the manner in which ſuch a numerous army as that of Seſoſtris could ſubſiſt. The gaining of a battle opened an immenſe country to the conqueror. The cities, abandoned by the conquered people, ſupplied the victorious army with proviſions. Once, however, the Egyptian hoſt was in danger of periſhing. Finding it impoſſible to ſubſiſt in Thrace, they were obliged immediately to return. From this we may infer, that they found in that country a ſerious reſiſtance to their arms, which they had not elſewhere experienced. The Thracians are ranked among the moſt warlike nations of antiquity, and were not eaſily diſpoſed, like the feeble inhabitants of the ſouth, to receive the law of the conqueror.

THE object of the antient heroes was to eſtabliſh their military fame, rather than to extend their dominions. Seſoſtris took no meaſures to preſerve and aſſure to his ſucceſ-

ſors

ſors the vaſt territories which had ſubmitted to his ſword. Satisfied with victory, this monarch never meditated to ſecure his conqueſts: Thus they retained no ſolid conſequences. Their duration reſembled their rapidity; they were loſt as ſoon as acquired; the vaſt empire formed by Seſoſtris did not deſcend to his poſterity.

AFTER an expedition of nine years, he returned to Egypt loaded with ſpoils, and attended with a numerous train of captives. His exalted genius was not unemployed. He applied to the arts of peace, the ſame ardour he had expreſſed in the operations of war. He built magnificent monuments in the ſtyle of the Egyptians. A hundred temples to the tutelar gods of all the cities were the firſt fruits of his victories. He erected two obeliſks of marble, 120 feet in height, and covered them with inſcriptions, recording the magnitude of his power, the amount of his revenues, and the nations he had conquered. He opened a great number of canals along the Nile, and raiſed mounds, to which he removed the cities, that they might be protected from the inundations of the river. To provide againſt the incurſions of the Syrians and Arabians,

The obeliſks.

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Arabians, he fortified the eaſt ſide of Egypt with a wall, which run from Peluſium to Heliopolis, 187 miles in length. Theſe works changed, improved, and defended Egypt.

ANTIENT conquerors frequently led captive in their train great numbers of the people whom they ſubdued. Hiſtory informs us of whole nations tranſported from one country to another. Seſoſtris purſued this maxim, and recorded in the inſcriptions on his pillars,—that his great works were executed by the people he conquered, not by his own ſubjects.

IT is related of this prince, that he was drawn in his chariot by captive kings; what is more aſtoniſhing, this ungenerous vanity is extolled by Diodorous Siculus as one of the moſt ſhining actions of his life. After a glorious reign, he was ſeized with blindneſs, a diſeaſe common in Egypt. He refuſed to procraſtinate a miſerable life, and fell by his own hand.

MONARCHIES have often a brilliant period, and after a tranſient ſplendor ſink into obſcurity. From the reign of this king to that of Seſac, Egypt did not ſignalize itſelf by any remarkable enterprize: The ſpirit of martial glory was ſoon extinguiſhed. As the various

provinces

provinces were now peaceably united under one head, they began to loſe their courage. The works which Seſoſtris had raiſed to guard and defend the country, rendered the inhabitants ſecure and careleſs. From this time the hiſtory of Egypt is a period of darkneſs, till the reign of Pſammetticus, 670 years before Chriſt. This prince opened his ports to ſtrangers, and the nation began to carry on a profitable traffic with the Greeks.

Intercourſe of the Greeks with the Egyptians.

UNDER the reign, and by the order of Nechos his ſon, Phenician navigators ſailed round Africa. Apries, the ſon of Nechos, was dethroned by Amaſis, in whoſe reign the Greeks began to have more frequent intercourſe with Egypt. Solon and Pythagoras, followed by a train of ſages, left their native land to ſtudy the wiſdom of the Egyptians. The reign of Pſammetticus, the ſon of Amaſis, is the epocha of the ſubjection of this famous monarchy. Cambyſes, king of Perſia, the ſucceſſor of Cyrus, ſubdued it in the 525th year before the Chriſtian æra. Egypt continued enſlaved, or tributary, to the Perſian power, till the throne of Cyrus was overturned by Alexander the Great.

Form of the Egyptian government.

MONARCHY had been eſtabliſhed in Egypt from time immemorial. The throne was hereditary,

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reditary, a proof of its high antiquity; but the power of the king was limited by the laws. The royal code, compoſed, as we are told, by one of the antient kings, made a part of the ſacred books. The public and private life of the monarch, his hours of pleaſure, as well as of buſineſs, were under the regulations of wiſdom. His court was to be compoſed of perſons the moſt renowned for their abilities and virtues. Rebuke was never addreſſed to the royal ear, but indirect warnings were given of the errors and vices into which ſovereigns might fall. Early in the morning, when he arrived in the temple, the high-prieſt diſcourſed on the duties of a ſovereign, painted in lively colours a bad king miſled by his evil counſellors, imprecated the vengeance of Heaven againſt thoſe that had led him aſtray, and beſought the gods to beſtow upon the prince all royal virtues, juſtice, magnanimity, and the love of his people. When the ſacrifice was ended, the ſacred books were opened; a portion of antient hiſtory was read, and thoſe actions of illuſtrious kings ſet in a fair light, which are moſt proper to inſpire virtue. Religion, which was all-powerful in Egypt, might render theſe inſtitutions effectual; and there never was a nobler triumph of religion, than

than in ſubjecting the lofty heart of a ſovereign to the laws. CHAP. I.

Judgment on deceaſed monarchs.

THE cuſtom of ſitting in judgment upon monarchs after their death, is in the train of the inſtitutions that I have mentioned, and ſhew that the kingdom of Egypt was very different from the empires of the eaſt. On the day appointed for the royal funeral, a public audience was held, where all complaints and accuſations were received againſt the deceaſed monarch. The prieſt began the ſolemnity by pronouncing his panegyric. If the king had reigned well, the multitudes who attended anſwered with loud acclamations; if he had reigned ill, a general murmur aroſe, accuſers ſtood forth, and kings have been deprived of burial by the deciſion of their ſubjects.

THE judgment of the living upon the dead would be ſtriking in every nation, but was calculated to make a particular impreſſion in Egypt, from the prejudices of the people. The Egyptians believed that the ſoul hovered about the body till putefaction took place: Hence they looked upon the rites of ſepulchre every where ſo ſacred, as connected with their future felicity; and they hoped, by the ſecret of embalming which they diſcovered, to ſurvive for ages in the tomb.

Thus

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Thus the ſovereigns of Egypt were accountable to the tribunal of the people; and the very idea of ſuch a ſolemn trial was a ſtrong additional motive to make them diſcharge the duty of ſovereigns. The monarch who erected a pyramid as his future habitation, would be naturally induced to reſpect the rights of his ſubjects, that they might aſſign him a place in the pyramid which he had erected to perpetuate his future fame. The Jews, who borrowed largely from the Egyptians, adopted, in part, this practice. Wicked kings were not buried in the ſepulchre of their fathers. This cuſtom prevailed to the time of the Aſmonean princes.

Monarchy the government of Egypt.

FROM this deſcription of the Egyptian government, it appears, that it was not deſpotic; it was indeed truly monarchical, from the principle and form of its conſtitution; and it is the ſingle government of all antiquity which correſponds to our idea of monarchy. Limits were ſet to the royal power by the laws; the order of ſucceſſion was regulated; the king had not the right of judging or pronouncing ſentence in any civil cauſe: the adminiſtration of juſtice was confined to a particular body, whoſe credit could counterbalance all the authority of the Pharaohs. Thus,

to

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to uſe the language of Monteſquieu, the powers were divided. The judicial power was ſeparated from royalty. Thirty judges formed the auguſt tribunal, which decided concerning the lives and fortunes of the people. They had fixed revenues, and held their offices for life, which rendered them independent of the prince. Theſe judges took a ſolemn oath at their inſtallation, that they would diſobey the king, in caſe he ſhould order them to pronounce an unjuſt ſentence. Beſides this college of thirty, which reſided at Thebes, particular magiſtrates in the towns decided in certain cauſes. The monarch did not even tax his ſubjects without their conſent. The provinces ſent, from time to time, deputies, who met in the labyrinths to determine all affairs of ſtate. Their manner of adminiſtering juſtice had ſomething in it auguſt and ſacred, and gives us the idea of a grave but a juſt people. No advocate appeared at the tribunal. Eloquence was not permitted to dazzle and deceive. The whole proceſs was committed to writing. The preſident wore about his neck a figure without eyes, repreſenting truth: He touched with this emblem the head of the party, in whoſe favour the determination was made.

Manner of adminiſtering juſtice.

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Reſpect to the rights of the ſubject.

IN conſequence of the limited monarchy that was eſtabliſhed in Egypt, we find a greater regard paid to the rights of the ſubject, than was known or imagined in the oriental empires. The two great objects of government, ſecurity to the property and the lives of the citizens, were maintained by the laws. We have already deſcribed the adminiſtration of juſtice. The perſon of the ſubject alſo was protected. A reverence was ſhewn to the natural rights of man. Human blood was reſpected. Pecuniary compenſations for murder, which mark a certain ſtage of ſociety between barbarity and refinement, were unknown in Egypt. The lives of all the ſubjects were equally ſecured. Murder was puniſhed with death, without reſpect of perſon or dignity: But a fair trial always preceded the ſentence. The ſummary deciſions of deſpotic government were unknown. The pannel was acquitted or condemned according to the laws.

THE ſacred records, which, in every particular that regards Egypt, correſpond with the beſt information from claſſical antiquity, confirm theſe accounts. Joſeph, a Hebrew ſlave, is accuſed of having offered the moſt outrageous and provoking affront to his maſter, one of the greateſt lords in the court of Pharaoh.

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noh. His lord did not doom him to inſtant death, as an eaſtern deſpot would have done: He ſent him to the common priſon, that he might be tried according to the laws.

Power of the prieſts.

THIS peculiarity in the Egyptian government aroſe, I apprehend, from the following cauſe. It was a fundamental law in Egypt, that the royalty and the prieſthood were incompatible. The Egyptians were the moſt religious people that are recorded in hiſtory. The power of the prieſt is always in proportion to the influence of religion. In Egypt it was immenſe. Beſide the natural influence which the direction of the popular ſuperſtition gave them, they were further admitted to the office of civil magiſtrates; and by their application to letters and to ſcience, they were intruſted with the conſervation of the laws, the archives, and the public records; with the education of the youth, the compoſition of the calendar, the ſurvey of the lands, the menſuration of the Nile, and all that pertained to medicine and embalming the dead.

AND what effectually ſecured their authority and influence, the function was not in the gift of the monarch. The prieſthood, like other profeſſions in Egypt, was hereditary, and deſcended from father to ſon. By theſe

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means they were not only independent of the ſovereign, but a check to the royal authority. They held the balance between the king and the people. When there was a vacancy in the throne, the new king was to be choſen from among the prieſts or the ſoldiers. If the election was made from the army, the prince was to be initiated into the myſteries of the prieſthood before he was crowned.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of the Arts and Sciences cultivated by the EGYPTIANS.

CHAP. II.

Arts and Sciences.

THE arts and ſciences which aroſe in Egypt, contributed to the celebrity which this people enjoy. As they were the firſt civilized nation in the world, and had no examples to imitate, they are entitled to the praiſe of genius and invention. Their particular ſituation urged their application to ſome arts, and favoured the cultivation of others. Agriculture, the mother of the arts, originated in Egypt. The inveſtion of the plough is aſcribed to Oſiris,

Agriculture.

Primus aratra manu ſolerti fecit Oſiris.

Corn grows ſpontaneouſly on the banks of the Nile. The ſoil is ſo light, that it is eaſily cultivated; and the firſt rude ploughs, though made of wood, were ſufficient for that purpoſe.

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THE land, enriched by the annual overflowing of the Nile, needed only the aſſiſtance of art to render it the moſt fertile part of the world. The warmth of the climate gives them two, and ſometimes three, crops in the year. The extraordinary fertility of Egypt was celebrated by the antients. Under the Roman emperors it was the granary of Italy. Under the Greek emperors, they drew from Alexandria all the corn which they conſumed at Conſtantinople. Forty-eight millions of Roman meaſures of corn were brought from Egypt to Rome in the time of Juſtinian. The bad policy of the Greeks deſtroyed the fruitfulneſs of Egypt. The government prohibited the exportation of corn: Agriculture of conſequence ſoon fell into decay, the banks and canals were neglected, and no other land was ſowed, ſave the fields bordering on the Nile. We need not be ſurpriſed, therefore, at the preſent barrenneſs of Egypt, in compariſon of its antient fertility. Want of cultivation hath turned a great part of it into a deſert.

WHEN the introduction of agriculture ſupplies the neceſſaries of life in abundance, men begin to cultivate the arts that originate from leiſure, and adminiſter to luxury. The myſterious art of working metals forms a remarkable

Art of working metals.

era